United Nations S/2003/560

Security Council

Distr.: General
21 May 2003

Original: English

Letter dated 16 May 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, and in view of the prevailing developments in Bunia, I have the honour to transmit herewith a press release issued by the Government of Uganda after the visit of the Third Deputy Prime Minister/Minister for Foreign Affairs, James Wapakhabulo, to France recently (see annex). The visit of Mr. Wapakhabulo and the discussions he held with his French counterpart, Dominique de Villepin, should remove any doubt as to Uganda's position regarding the developments in the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Semakula Kiwanuka**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations

03-36943 (E) 230503

Annex to the letter dated 16 May 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Press release

London, 6 May 2003

The Hon. James Wapakhabulo, Third Deputy Prime Minister/Minister for Foreign Affairs, met the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Dominique de Villepin, in Paris on 5 May 2003.

The two Ministers discussed the recent developments in the Great Lakes region, including the situation in Ituri, the withdrawal of UPDF from Bunia, the peace process in Burundi and the proposed international conference on the reconstruction and development of the Great Lakes region.

The Hon. Wapakhabulo briefed his French counterpart on the full withdrawal of UPDF from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in accordance with the Security Council resolutions, the Luanda Agreement and the 9 April 2003 summit in Cape Town, South Africa. He underlined the danger of increased inter-ethnic conflict in Ituri, and called on France, as a permanent member of the Security Council, to support the urgent deployment of a more robust MONUC or AU force in Ituri with an adequate mandate under Chapter VII.

The French Foreign Minister appreciated the gravity of the situation in the north-eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the need for a more robust MONUC deployment to ensure peace and security in Ituri.

The Hon. Wapakhabulo has been on a visit to Europe for discussions with the Governments of the United Kingdom, Belgium and France, and with the European Union, on the situation in the Great Lakes region.